

2021 Diabetes Report Recommends Increasing Access to Programs and Establishing Delaware Diabetes Registry

DOVER, DE (June 28, 2021) – Increasing in-person and online access to diabetes programs and establishing a diabetes registry are key recommendations in [*The Impact of Diabetes in Delaware, 2021*](#) report, delivered to the Delaware General Assembly Monday June 28.

The biennial report was produced by Delaware's Department of Health and Social Service's Division of Public Health (DPH) and Division of Medicaid & Medical Assistance (DMMA), and the Department of Human Resources' Statewide Benefits Office (SBO).

DPH, DMMA, and SBO make eight recommendations to reduce Delaware's diabetes burden and improve health outcomes among adults with, or who are at-risk for, the disease:

1. Promote healthy lifestyles through stakeholder collaboration.
2. Continue to educate State of Delaware employees and retirees, especially those at highest risk for diabetes and its related complications, about the signs and symptoms of diabetes and available prevention and management programs/resources, and to continue to highlight the National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) and Medicare Prevention Program as covered benefits.
3. Promote clinical-community linkages to increase the percentage of Delawareans with diabetes who comply with diabetes recommendations.

4. Leverage electronic health record capabilities and other technologies to improve medication adherence among people with diabetes.
5. Develop a statewide Delaware Diabetes Registry to monitor diabetes management and reduce disparities in health outcomes among Delawareans with diabetes.
6. Increase in-person and online access to, and participation in, the nationally- recognized and evidence-based National Diabetes Prevention Program for adults at high-risk for diabetes.
7. Increase in-person and online access to, and participation in, Diabetes Self-Management Education for adults with diabetes.
8. Create and implement a comprehensive Diabetes Training Module for Community Health Workers, Nurse Navigators, lay leaders, and health coaches to standardize prediabetes and diabetes support efforts in Delaware.

In Delaware, more than 98,700 adults are diagnosed with diabetes each year. While there is no cure for the chronic disease, diabetes is treatable with healthy lifestyle behaviors and a medication regimen to control blood glucose levels. Untreated diabetes can lead to heart disease, stroke, amputation, end-stage kidney disease, blindness, and death. Those at greater risk of developing the disease are older adults, people of color, and those with lower education and household incomes.

Like other states, diabetes prevalence is increasing in Delaware. Of the Delaware adults surveyed through the 2019 Delaware Behavior Risk Factor Survey (BRFS), 12.8% reported that they had been diagnosed with diabetes, a prevalence greater than the U.S. (11%) and Delaware's 2018 BRFS result (11.9%). It is estimated that as many as 25,000 adults may be living with undiagnosed diabetes. Twelve percent of Delaware

adults who said they were diagnosed with prediabetes have a chance to prevent diabetes by adapting their diet, increasing their physical activity, and losing weight. More than two-thirds of Delaware adults risk developing diabetes because they are obese or overweight.

On average, medical expenditures for a person with diabetes are 2.3 times higher than for a person without diabetes. Prediabetes and diabetes cost the State of Delaware \$1.1 billion each year, reflecting \$818 million in direct medical expenses and \$293 million in indirect costs. In Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20), Delaware Medicaid managed care organizations directly reimbursed providers nearly \$40.7 million in diabetes-related care, a 9% increase over the previous fiscal year. In FY20, an additional two million dollars was paid directly to providers via fee-for-service claims for diabetes-related care among Delaware Medicaid clients. Among active state employees, early retirees, and Medicare retirees covered by the Group Health Insurance Plan, the total allowed amount for diabetes increased 32%, rising from \$57.5 million to \$75.9 million between Fiscal Year 2017 and FY20.

Prevention, early diagnosis, and effective self-management can avert and reduce costly outcomes. The “Delaware Diabetes Plan” embedded in the report calls for coordinating efforts with multiple stakeholders around four pillars: awareness, clinical collaborations, self-management, and support.

For a free copy of *The Impact of Diabetes in Delaware, 2021* report, visit <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/files/diabetesburdenreport2021.pdf> or call DPH’s Diabetes and Heart Disease Prevention and Control Program at 302-744-1020. To access diabetes and heart disease assistance and resources, visit <https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/diabetes.html>. For BRFSS prevalence tables, visit <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/brfsurveys.html>. To read the law that mandates the report, visit [16 Del. Code](#).

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